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/Information on the tarawad as a matrilineal joint family will be found in category 613./

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[524] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged through out the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste
595 and beget children for his family. Younger sons had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters, of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

In the royal lineages, since each lineage, though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 Powerful emotional ties bind a Nayar to his ancestral
[342] land and to his house, which is large and beautifully constructed of whitewashed laterite, carved wooden pillars and a tiled roof. The lineage-names of retainer-Nayars are the names of original ancestral sites in the village, e.g., Kirakkutt Velappil ("Eastern Garden"). Desavari lineages take the name of their desam, chiefly lineages of their nad, and royal lineages of their kingdom. The knowledge that their matrilineal forbears once jointly owned a house and land holds lineage-members together.

[361] Except in unusual circumstances (i.e., if it is dying out) a lineage comprises several households, traditionally congregated in separate gardens some distance apart on a stretch of dry land
613 in the village. Today with the vast increase in
596 population during British rule, a lineage may comprise up to 20 or more households; traditionally, it seems usually to have contained about four to ten. Each of these households comprised a segment of the lineage, [41] usually, a group of siblings together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. The household was also the unit whose members jointly owned ancestral garden land, kanam rice lands and movable property: I call it a property-group. The lineage as a whole (unless it were dying out and comprised only one property-group) owned no property in common and its members had no economic cooperation as a group.

613 The lineage was exogamous, and matrilineal kinship terms were extended throughout its

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Nambūdiri Brahm
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahmans

father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Irava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil-Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

8: Panikkar

AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

● 596

/Information on what the author calls the "Nayar family," consisting of all the descendants from the same ancestress, will be found in category 613./

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tītal, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the household, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India

APPENDIX.

I. A Possible Improvement.

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By deepening the stream that flows in rainy season along the northern boundary of this desam, the lands that lie along them which now yield only a single crop can be made double crop lands.

II. Emigration.

167

There are five men in Ceylon working as labourers and sending small sums to their aged parents. These return at intervals of two or three years. There is also the annual emigration of the carpenters to Calicut.

III. A Typical Family.

596 ●
[428]

The family is not composed of a husband, wife and children. The people follow the 'Marumakkattayam' form of inheritance, i.e., inheritance along the line of the nephew. Thus the family consists of an aged mother or grandmother and her sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters of these sisters and their progeny, and so on. The eldest male member is the 'Karnavan,' the guardian and manager of the family, all the rest are 'Anandravans' who pay allegiance to the head. The male members of one family marry the females of another and vice versa, but each lives apart and they only join occasionally. The system, however, is rudely breaking up under modern conditions.

TODA AW 60
KERALA AW 11

K 131 595 596 428 591 Tiyan Polyandry. The Tiyas living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

T: 123 To 123 K 123 *General Conclusions.* I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

T: 155 To 155 K 155 As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182 As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-